Harrisburg's Civil War *Patriot and Union:* Its Conciliatory Viewpoint Collapses

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By the autumn of 1864, the editors of Harrisburg's daily *Patriot and Union* had written themselves into journalistic trouble. Their staunchly Democratic newspaper was read throughout the Commonwealth, but especially in Dauphin, Cumberland, and Perry counties. In its columns, they advocated a conciliatory approach toward the South. Then the Confederates raided Chambersburg, showed no bent for conciliation, burned the heart of the town. The editors printed dispatches calculated to prove that the Republican administration's military performance was a failure. William Tecumseh Sherman took Atlanta. They hailed George Brinton McClellan as a leader who could put the war to rest, who would follow a party platform that called for a prompt truce. McClellan repudiated the platform.

This is the story of how those positions came to be taken by the Harrisburg editors, and how they affected the vote.

The *Patriot and Union* was not a newspaper to take advantage of its proximity to the fighting war, not even doorstep proximity. At least 45 newspapermen were on or near the battlefield at Gettysburg—not one of them from Harrisburg.[1] In quieter times, the paper would usually give space to the routine events of Mechanicsburg and the rest of eastern Cumberland County. During the 1863 invasion, for firsthand news from the West Shore it had only reports from travelers straggling in; and, the editors reported, the military soon refused passes even to cross the Susquehanna. They were left to rely upon the same telegraphed dispatches that reached every daily newspaper in the East.[2] Their best original coverage, an imaginative squib about "The Burning of Carlisle," was written in Harrisburg from "[t]he riverbank - lined with anxious faces, all lighted with the unnatural glare of the western sky;" in fact the shells from Jeb Stuart's horse artillery set only Carlisle Barracks afire.[3]

The *Patriot and Union* shrank from real combat reporting partly, no doubt, because of the cost—but partly also by editorial design. The newspaper was

primarily a political sheet, tightly aligned with the Pennsylvania Democratic Party. The two men publishing it in 1862 had come to their posts in 1858 from a background in purely political journalism. Oramel Barrett and Thomas C. MacDowell had been the publishers of a weekly journal of opinion, *The Key Stone,* printing early reports and comments on the evils of Black Republicanism. Barrett—his name was always printed "O. Barrett"—was later to be recalled as "a man of quiet, unobtrusive disposition, but of considerable decision of character." MacDowell was a practicing lawyer, known in political circles around the state.[4]

How closely their paper was tied to the Democratic Party appears in the report it ran about the "State Editorial Convention" that met with the state Democratic nominating convention, June 18, 1863: the agenda called for "an arrangement by which more perfect concert of action between the local presses of the State will be secured, and greater efficiency in the conduct of political campaigns attained." The editorialists from around the state elected as their secretary the *Patriot and Union's* writer Harry Ward. Then in his mid-twenties, Ward was the scion of a prominent family in Towanda, Bradford County. He was, it was said, a "very bright man," but overly given to drink.[5]

The newspaper was a private business venture—its newsstand price two cents, a year's subscription five dollars, two dollars to legislators when the General Assembly was in session. The editor-publishers paid for their up-to-date steam-driven press with commercial advertising—half or just slightly less of the four broadsheet pages every day. Barrett was not above running puff pieces about his advertisers, stories praising the "civil and accommodating" clerks at Eby & Kunkel's new grocery story, Fifth and Market, and the "exquisitely painted" art at Knoche's music emporium, down the street.[6] By a rough survey, the *Patriot and Union* in 1862 was carrying more local advertising than its everyday rival, the *Pennsylvania Telegraph,* published since 1855 by German-born, fiercely Republican George Bergner.[7]

As a Democratic Party organ, the *Patriot and Union* suffered a financial disadvantage, not only from being shut out of much of the government's advertising. The local postmaster was perforce a Republican—a particular Republican, George Bergner, not by chance. Lincoln himself was once a former small-town postmaster, was always a careful student of journalism. Understanding the connection, as president he allotted postmasterships to at least ten Republican publishers of major daily newspapers.[8] (Andrew Jackson, it may be noted, had given government appointments to fifty-five of them.[9]) Covering the state capital, the *Patriot and Union* and the *Telegraph* both had aspirations to statewide circulation and importance. The papers reached the railroads, then the distant subscribers, only through the post office. With Bergner in charge, as Barrett complained, subscribers not a hundred miles away were saying that "they did not

get a paper until Saturday evening, and then got six of them by one mail." At the post office in time for the same morning train, the *Telegraph's* bundles reached Pittsburgh that evening, the Democrats' twenty-four hours later.[10]

But an organ of either party could gain significant strength from its political affiliation. Michael Schudson and other historians of American journalism have pointed to the "kind of association in itself" that was the newspaper of this era. Editors "spoke intimately to the specific needs and interests of their constituent audiences."[11] Adding political discourse to the mix created a strong bond. The newspaper and its readers defined themselves by their relationship. A politically active reader in downstate Illinois wrote in April, 1862, "I was one of the first Republicans in this section of the country as I began to take the *[Chicago Tribune]* in "58."[12] The columns of the *Patriot and Union* contained a great deal of vituperation directed at Republicans; the articles supporting Democratic candidates offered praise, of course, but with a striking lack of advocacy. A great deal of detail might have been printed, for example, about August Roumfort, a Dauphin County Democrat who ran for the state senate in 1862—he was a West Point graduate, former headmaster of a prominent school, for twelve years a senior executive with the Pennsylvania Railroad. Enough for the *Patriot and Union* to give only a quick outline, with the talismanic words, "a sound Democrat—a gentleman and a patriot."[13] No need for more. Agreement was assured among the readers—the party faithful.

Those Democratic Party faithful were numerous in Pennsylvania. Even on the darkest day of the party's fortunes, November 6, 1860, the fractured Democratic vote totaled 41.1 per cent. A better test of party allegiance was that year's elections for state offices, held a month earlier (pursuant to the peculiar Pennsylvania custom of the time); the Democratic candidates had gotten 46.7 per cent of the vote. Not winning percentages, these, but a sizable circulation base. The share dropped slightly in the 1861 state canvass, but, by Joel Silbey's cliometric analysis, in the elections of 1862 through 1864 the Democratic Party was "more competitive" in Pennsylvania than in any other major Northern state.[14]

In the *Patriot and Union,* as in most smaller dailies, the party message reached the faithful on page two, the heart of the paper: editorials, a few notices of local party meetings, wire stories, and a careful selection of mixed news and opinions from corresponding newspapers. Barrett and MacDowell were free to reprint anything they received in the mail " not until after 1909 did the courts generally recognize proprietary rights in newspaper articles.[15] In 1862, the editors chose to copy mostly from like-minded papers—New York's *Journal of Commerce;* George Dennison Prentice's *Louisville Journal;* the intellectual, conservative, and moribund *National Intelligencer* from Washington; and the *New York World,* after September, 1862, the nation's leading Democratic Party journal. Through the *Patriot and Union,* the serious thoughts of the respectable minor-

ity reached south-central Pennsylvania.

For all the copying, the paper spoke with its own voice "- a daily rush of commentary and exhortation from Barrett and MacDowell, partisan wit from Ward. Their message during the campaign season of 1862: the Administration was violating civil rights and the Constitution; the Union must be restored by way of a conciliatory approach to the South.

These editors could write with personal conviction about the Republican assault on citizens' liberties. Wednesday, August 6, 1862, Barrett, MacDowell, and two of their junior writers were rousted out, put "under an escort of gleaming bayonets," and taken by train to Washington, to the Old Capitol Prison.[16] The ostensible reason for the arrests—a bogus handbill, printed on a *Patriot and Union* job press, falsely announcing a war rally at which the Blacks of Harrisburg would be invited to join the army by United States Senator and sometime Brigadier General James Henry Lane.[17]

The formal charge against the editors was discouragement of enlistments.[18] That was a serious matter, just when the Administration was calling for 300,000 more troops, but it was hardly an obvious legal conclusion from the facts stated. One of the Republican newspapers in Philadelphia, *The Press,* immediately provided some alternative legal logic. The "evident motive" of the *Patriot and Union's* "infamous proceeding," it announced August 7, was "to incite a riot between the blacks and whites." *The Press* cited a recent disturbance in Brooklyn by Irish immigrant laborers angry at competition from Blacks.

If this seems contrived, so do the circumstances of the arrest. It was effected without legal authority. On Thursday, July 31, Secretary of War Edwin Stanton had appointed a former abolitionist newspaperman, possessed of "a fine legal mind and indefatigable energy," Levi C. Turner, to be associate judge advocate for "the army around Washington," in charge of "state and military prisoners." Not until August 8, Friday a week later, two days after the *Patriot and Union* editors were tossed into prison, was Turner authorized to put them there by another Stanton order, this one extending to acts of "discouraging volunteer enlistments" in any "city, town, or district."[19]

The real reason for the editors' incarceration is to be found, likely as not, in a newspaper brawl carried on with their Republican competitor during the preceding month. On July 12, Barrett's local news columns began to suggest that money mailed home by husbands away in the army was not reaching their wives in Harrisburg - that, in the paper's words, "there is a screw loose in the Post Office in this city." After more stories of missing mail, postmaster Bergner filed a libel suit.[20] Barrett countered with his own libel suit. There the matter lay - until the arrests.

Bergner was not without political clout in Washington—the "grand sachem," he was later called, of Simon Cameron's political tribe.[21] The affair bespoke

clout. The military governor of Washington, the venerable Brigadier General James Samuel Wadsworth, personally came to Harrisburg to attend to the arrests.[22] Wadsworth was an honest, righteous volunteer soldier, no deep thinker and perhaps overly eager to answer any call to act on his long-held beleif in a pro slavery conspiracy, "a calculating, comprehensive treason..."[23]

As luck would have it, the dragnet August 6 failed to scoop up Harry Ward. Freed from the influence of older and soberer newsmen, he kept the newspaper alive—excoriating Bergner, beating the drum for Democratic candidates, generally enjoying himself in print. Ward wrote a running account of the editors' imprisonment and kept printing their defense, adding weight by quoting it from the *Clearfield Republican:* the handbill, the story went, August 16, "was the work of two or three thoughtless printer boys...about which [Barrett and MacDowell] were totally ignorant

The Local and the Lofty

In the fashion of the time, the Patriot and Union's *unabashedly political editors adorned their paper's masthead with the Democratic state and local slates and the broad policy pronouncement of the Crittenden Resolution. This particular sample was published August 9, 1862, when most of the editorial staff had just been locked up in Washington's Old Capital Prison, but the message was reprinted daily.*

DEMOCRATIC STATE TICKET.

AUDITOR GENERAL,

ISAAC SLENKER,

OF UNION COUNTY.

SURVEYOR GENERAL,

JAMES P. BARR,

OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY.

COUNTY NOMINATIONS.

CONGRESS,

WM. H. MILLER, Harrisburg,

(*Subject to the Decision of the Congressional Conference*)

ASSEMBLY,

A. L. ROUMFORT, Harrisburg.

LEWIS HECK, Middle Paxton.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY

S. P. AUCHMUTY, Millersburg.

COMMISSIONER,

GEORGE HOCKER, South Hanover.

AUDITOR,

J. J. WALLACE, Wiconisco.

THE NATIONAL PLATFORM!

PURPOSES OF THE WAR!

CONGRESS, BY A VOTE NEARLY UNANIMOUS, PASSED THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION, WHICH EXPRESSES THE VOICE OF THE NATION AND IS THE TRUE STANDARD OF LOYALTY:

"That the present deplorable civil war has been forced upon the country by the disunionists of the Southern States, now in arms against the Constitutional Government, and in arms around the Capital; that in this National emergency, Congress, banishing all feeling of mere passion or resentment, will recollect only its duty to the whole country; *that this war is not waged on their part in any spirit of oppression, or for any purpose of conquest or subjugation or purpose of overthrowing or interfering with the rights or established institutions of those States, but to defend and maintain the supremacy of the Constitution, and to preserve the Union, with all the dignity equality, and rights of the several States unimpaired; and that as soon as these objects are accomplished the war ought to cease."*

until arrested." A military commission finally sat, at 8 in the evening, Friday, August 22. Barrett and company found themselves facing no formal charge, no accuser, no prosecution witness - only a copy of the miscreant handbill. They were set free on their promise not to discourage enlistments. As their paper reported their homecoming, they were "surrounded by friends who made the welkin ring with enthusiastic cheers," by a crowd that "numbered nearly a thousand men."[24]

Perhaps, though the assault on Harrisburg's Democratic paper—like similar assaults later against the *Chicago Times* and the New York *World*—seems to have aroused less anger among the informed general public than Democratic editors and orators must have hoped. "These are strong measures," conceded patrician Philadelphian and conservative Democrat Sidney George Fisher when he heard of the *Patriot and Union's* plight, "but not too strong for the emergency, for the war has become really a matter of life or death, not to the Union only, but to the government..."[25] There was that attitude, and there was the fact that the newspaper was in no way silenced, was not even muted, by the affair. "We are afraid," the editors reported August 30, eight days out of jail, that "we are very close to the truth when we pronounce Gen. Pope to be, in our opinion, a humbug."

It was well for these newspapermen that the prosecution failed to go forward. The accusation that they had written the handbill rings true. With a sophisticated wit not often shown by printers' apprentices, that handbill brought together and made harsh sport of two Republican positions running directly against the great aim of the *Patriot and Union* and its Democratic readers—conciliation with the South. The enrollment of Blacks in the army had been approved by the Republican-dominated Congress not three weeks earlier. The thought of former slaves in Federal uniforms was believed, perhaps rightly, to horrify Southerners, to harden the resolve of the Confederacy, to smash hopes of compromise. Jim Lane, for his part, the notorious "Kansas border ruffian," was a living symbol of the harsh treatment many Republicans wanted the army to inflict upon the rebels, civilians and all, without regard to any later repercussions. In September, 1861, finding Osceola, Missouri, sympathetic to the rebel cause, Lane had become the first Union commander to destroy an unfriendly town with artillery fire.[26]

The *Patriot and Union's* objective must be seen in context. Restoration of the Union through a posture of conciliation did for one brief moment attain the appearance of a national policy. On July 22 and 25, 1861, Congress with near unanimity passed the Crittenden-Johnson Resolution. The document was an extreme, strong, forthright statement of minimal war aims. It declared, "this war is not waged...for any purpose of conquest or subjugation or purpose of overthrowing or interfering with the rights of [Southern] States." For the first half of the war, the editors of the *Patriot and Union* reprinted the resolution as

part of every second-page masthead, under the headline, "The National Platform."

There was never any national consensus favoring conciliation. George McClellan, Don Carlos Buell, others among the Army's professional leadership held to the view that combat troops should be restrained lest the South be irreparably outraged.[27] On July 7, 1862, for Lincoln's edification, McClellan wrote a treatise on the subject, known later as the "Harrison's Landing Letter."[28] But as early as May 28, 1861, the *Chicago Tribune* articulated the views of its tens of thousands of readers: "We shall burn their towns, sink their ships and boats, kill as many of them as we can in battle, and if necessary desolate their fields. This is war." Slavery was, of course, the greater barrier to conciliation, and, as James M. McPherson has written, "seldom if ever in American politics has an issue so polarized the major parties."[29]

From the standpoint strictly of government policy, the president and the Senate implicitly resolved both issues on the final day of the 37th Congress, July 17, 1862. Notorious advocates of harsh and aggressive war were named to fill coveted slots as brigadier generals, and, as a "shrewd republican" told the *New York Herald* the day before, "a great number of promotions of those who are not recognized as radicals have been passed over."[30] A nominally enhanced Confiscation Act was made law, ultimately unenforceable and largely symbolic—except for its authorization to the president "to employ as many persons of African descent as he may deem necessary and proper for the suppression of this rebellion, and for this purpose he may organize and use them in such manner as he may judge best for the public welfare." A free hand for the Black Republican to enroll Blacks in the army.[31]

Lincoln publicly sealed both issues in September. He sent a message to conciliation-minded generals by cashiering an outspoken advocate of "soft" war, a supporter of McClellan, Major Thomas Key;[32] McClellan himself, and Buell, were soon to lose their commands. Much more spectacularly, Lincoln issued the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation. Once the Blacks were set free, no Democratic victory at the polls was likely return them to slavery, a point the *Chicago Tribune's* Joseph Medill had privately suggested months earlier. "[L]et the Democrats go before the people on the issue of reinslavement."[33]

In Harrisburg, the *Patriot and Union's* Thomas MacDowell must have come to the same conclusion. After reading the Proclamation, he wrote a sad, cryptic farewell editorial, paused until after the election, then gave up journalism.

Barrett labored on - and with success, though the editorial positions that remained to the *Patriot and Union* were necessarily somewhat off-center from reality. Barrett could try to keep his readers' hopes of conciliation alive, as by leading them to think that events on the battlefields had not gone so far as to create a permanent North-South alienation. Barrett did not fall into the fatal

trap of minimizing the heroism and hardships of the soldiers, not a few of whom were Democrats, and many of whom wrote home. He did subtly minimize the broader image of the war.

On the issue of slavery, Barrett could be blunter. He and a large share of his readers were, in a word, racists, to whom continued slavery in the South was no barrier to reconciliation. Important to recognize that thoroughgoing contempt for Blacks was a respectable attitude in Pennsylvania at the time of the Civil War, an attitude despised, to be sure, by abolitionists, but not by a large share of the politically active. The fact had been appreciated in the 1860 campaign by the state's Republicans—they sidestepped discussion about emancipation, to say nothing of advocacy.[34] David Wilmot, the famous Free-Soiler, had failed dismally in his 1857 candidacy for the governorship.[35] For that matter, racism was nearly everywhere espoused as a valid principle by the Democratic Party and its journalist members. The most genteel of them, Manton Marble of the New York *World,* wrote near the end of the 1862 campaign: "This election will decide whether a swarthy inundation of negro laborers and paupers will flood the North, accumulating new burdens on our tax-payers, cheapening white labor by black competition, repelling immigration, and raising dangerous questions of political and social equality."[36]

How the military and slavery issues played out in journalistic practice is particularly clear from the *Patriot and Union's* columns just before the Pennsylvania state and congressional election, October 14, 1862. Barrett could not reasonably omit to mention J.E.B. Stuart's visit to Chambersburg October 11—not when the headlines had to include "Great Excitement in the City" and "The Militia in Motion." But the *Patriot and Union* printed little more about it until October 15, when a wire story from McClellan's army began, "The news of the success of Stewart's cavalry raid into Pennsylvania, and in the rear of this army, has occasioned unnecessary excitement among the troops." If excitement were wanted, Barrett preferred to provide it with a blatant appeal to his readers' fear and loathing of Blacks, to the end of accepting Southern slavery. The morning of the vote, he filled two columns on his front page with an account of atrocities against whites in the Haitian revolution of August, 1794. The headline: "Look on this Picture."

The Democrats did well in Harrisburg in the 1862 canvass. The 14th Congressional District (mainly, the city and the rest of Dauphin County) elected Democrat Henry William Miller by a 500-vote margin. He was a lawyer theretofore distinguished only as prothonotary, clerk for civil business, of the state supreme court.[37] But, then, the Democrats did well throughout the state, capturing 50.4 per cent of the vote for state offices, 50.7 per cent of the congressional vote. The party and the *Patriot and Union* may be excused for concluding

that their twin themes furthering conciliation had struck a chord with party members (who turned out in a greater proportion of their strength than did the Republicans), and also with what Professor Silbey calls the "marginal, non-Democratic conservative voters."[38]

And so, for 1863, they repeated the themes. On June 18, the party convention nominated George Washington Woodward, a judge of the state supreme court. Woodward was widely known for telling a rally in Philadelphia in December, 1860, that chattel slavery was divinely sanctioned and a positive benefit to Blacks, given what he believed to be their innate inferiority as a race. Beyond those remarks, and their limited but distinct appeal, he had few other qualifications that might have led him to expect success at the polls. Wealthy and aloof, he went fishing rather than attend the convention that nominated him. A poor speaker, he used the excuse of his judgeship to avoid taking the stump during the campaign. At the very last minute, supporters secured for him the endorsement of George McClellan—the price to McClellan, it has since been said, of admission to party politics.[39]

At the newspaper, Barrett expanded upon his past theme—minimalization of the fighting. He turned the slant of his columns also toward emphasis on the Republican leadership's alleged inability to fight and win. Having in mind Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, this was not at the time altogether an irrational editorial decision.

As applied to Gettysburg, however, it produced stories just short of the bizarre. When Confederate forces moved toward and into Pennsylvania, the *Patriot and Union* feigned not to see the threat. A June 22 news story: "It is very probable that the rebel force now in Maryland will not penetrate further north." A June 29 summary discussing the rebel strength of force: "Our own opinion is that it is not half 10,000."

The paper's coverage of the actual battle gives the lie to any thought that the articles were merely intended to calm the populace. On July 4, the *Patriot and Union* printed its only full coverage of the fighting—the *New York Herald's* detailed account of the Union retreats on the first day. The *Herald's* later and no less colorful reports of Union success on the second and third days were ignored; short wire stories ran instead. Finally, in an editorial on June 6, Barrett drew this lesson from the undeniable Union victory: "Having at length gained a military advantage over the rebellion...let us hold out to the Southern people the olive branch, taking from them no other conditions than a return to the old order of things." That same day, the *Telegraph* enthusiastically printed as headlines: The Victory Complete, and Dreadful Slaughter of Rebels, with stirring dispatches from *The New York Times* and the *New York Tribune.*

After Gettysburg and the nearly simultaneous capture of Vicksburg, antiwar sentiment abated. In the attempt to unseat Governor Andrew Curtin, Judge

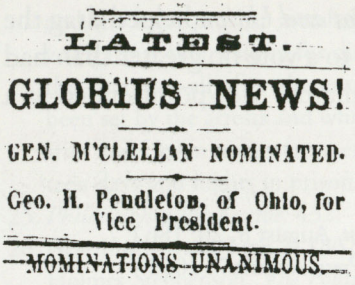
Woodward failed. This might have been a signal to the *Patriot and Union,* that its conciliatory editorial positions were coming unravelled. That, and the increasing, irreversible numbers of Blacks in the army. Before the long presidential campaign of 1864, Barrett left the paper to move to Washington; he was no longer at his desk, holding the old arguments together with some measure of deftness and logic. Harry Ward took his wry humor home to Towanda. Little is known about the new publishers—first "Campbell & Hite," then "J.K. Hite & A.J. Hite"—except that they lived in boarding houses and acted "For the Patriot and Union Association," presumably a Democratic Party committee of politicians and money men.

Ward had once whimsically written, "the *Patriot and Union* has been running in Democratic grooves so long that the impetus of the past keeps it moving without any assistance whatever. Our Teuton pressman has but to set the machine going, and the types, arranging themselves, print loyal and true doctrines..."[40] There is truth in the comment. Once a serious-minded journal has been set on a particular course, even if wrong-headed, sharp change becomes mentally difficult and may seem hazardous, financially and politically. The new editors and the editorial committee did not attempt any new feats of editorial navigation. They unthinkingly held to the old program.

As a result, they did not know quite what they might sensibly write about the destruction of Chambersburg, Saturday, July 30, 1864, an unprecedented act of Confederate military policy, not an accident of war. Two not-at-all-conciliatory brigades of Confederate cavalry brutalized residents and burned twelve blocks of homes and stores when a ransom of $100,000 in gold or $500,000 in currency went unpaid.[41] "Another humiliation," the *Patriot and Union* editors wrote, August 1, "the fault of both the State and Federal authorities." On further reflection, they added August 2 that "Abraham Lincoln is the principal cause of this calamity." George Bergner's writers at the *Telegraph* knew precisely how to play the story. They filled their paper's columns with horrific detail, most of it not far off what in fact had happened.

Barrett and MacDowell had spent time writing their own columns and, evidently, sifting through wire reports and out-of-town papers. The new editors of 1864 hit upon an easier way. They cribbed, almost every day, the military roundup article from *The Age,* a Philadelphia daily launched in March, 1863, as an avowedly pro-slavery, anti-Administration, and, especially, antiwar journal.[42] Thus, while Sherman was in reality beginning to encircle Atlanta on August 1, after his victory at Ezra Church July 28, the *Patriot and Union* had his troops retreating and Hood's Confederates on the eve of an offensive. When the inevitable happened, when Atlanta fell, the shocked Democratic readers were left to reflect upon the lack of forewarning in the *Patriot and Union.*

The newspaper had long been one of George McClellan's greatest propo-


LATEST.

GLORIUS NEWS!

GEN. M'CLELLAN NOMINATED.

Geo. H. Pendleton, of Ohio, for Vice President.

NOMINATIONS UNANIMOUS.

THE TELEGRAPH LINES brought news of McClellan's nomination to the Patriot and Union *the very day it happened, August 31, 1864. The excited editors brought it to the readers in the final edition, and with such excitement that they overlooked typographical errors in the headline they had waited years to print.*

nents. Barrett understood the journalistic appeal of a live, individual hero. The paper blamed the Administration for the misfortunes suffered by this "adept of military science" during the Seven Days in 1862. Barrett had denounced the sacking of McClellan that November, then wistfully hoped for his restoration to command during "the Great Raid" in 1863. The new editors followed right along. As did many of the Pennsylvania Democracy, they thumped for his nomination well before the convention in Chicago at the end of August. The nomination secured, they reported August 31 that in Harrisburg, "Every face beamed with gladness, every heart pulsated with joy." His conciliatory Harrison's Landing letter from two years earlier was reprinted as a platform document.[43] Then, rashly, they announced September 6 that the voters could rely upon McClellan to endorse the official party platform, calling as it did for the ultimate conciliatory concession: after a reference to the failure of "the experiment of war," it promised "immediate efforts...for a cessation of hostilities." Late September 8, McClellan accepted the nomination but implicitly repudiated the platform. He wanted as a predicate at least a Confederate promise to rejoin the Union.[44]

The *Telegraph* was prepared for this. September 9, Bergner printed the sarcastic headline above the full text of McClellan's letter of acceptance, "He Accepts the Nomination - Talks all Around the Peace Proposition - Ignores the Idea of a Cessation of Hostilities - and Goes for the Whole Union." In the same issue the reader could find Grant's letter of August 16, calling for national unity behind Lincoln; a self-congratulatory message from Sherman, pointedly datelined Atlanta; and an account of Sheridan's latest triumphs in the Shenandoah Valley.

The fallacy of the *Patriot and Union's* editorial positions had thus been fully exposed, its credibility shattered. By seeming foolish, it made the more perceptive of its readers feel foolish as well—no satisfactory way to maintain a close association. A sad end it was to the strenuous efforts of Barrett and MacDowell.

Did the collapse of their editorial position matter, when the votes were counted? McClellan carried 35 of Pennsylvania's 66 counties; Lincoln won the state only by 20,000 votes of 573,000 cast, for 51.8 per cent. In Dauphin, however, the *Patriot and Union's* home base, Lincoln's percentage was 56.8, just ahead of Governor Curtin's mandate over George Woodward in 1863. As in any election, countless variables may be cited to explain a local outcome. A fair

comment, nonetheless, is that in the end the *Patriot and Union* helped drag the famous General George Brinton McClellan down to a vote no greater than had been won by a reclusive judge. The editors' conciliatory viewpoint ended as a casualty of the Civil War.

Notes

The author wishes to thank Robert Mason of the Newspaper Room, Pennsylvania State Library, and James Woodman of the Reference Department, Library of the Boston Athenaeum, for their assistance in providing source material.

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3. *Patriot,* July 3, 1863.
4. Barrett obituary, *Patriot,* Aug. 5, 1887; comments about MacDowell in *The Press* (Philadelphia), Aug. 8, 1862.
5. Obituary file, dated October, 1888, Dauphin County Historical Society, Harrisburg.
6. July 14, 17, 1862.
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12. Rev. A.J. Stewart to Sen. Lyman Trumbull, April 21, 1862, Trumbull Papers, Library of Congress.
13. Aug. 18, 1862.
14. Joel H. Silbey, *A Respectable Minority, The Democratic Party in the Civil War Era, 1860-1868* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1977), 20, 22, 142, 151-52.
15. *International News Service v. The Associated Press,* 248 U.S. 215, 234 (1918).
16. *Patriot,* August 8, 26, 1862.
17. *The Press,* August 7, 1862.
18. *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies,* 128 vols. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), series II, vol. 4, 585 (hereinafter cited, *e.g., "O.R.,* II, 4, 585").
19. Turner obituary, *New York Times,* March 15, 1867; *O.R.,* II, 4, 343, 359.
20. *Telegraph,* July 21, 1862 ("...[W]hen parties make charges repeatedly against our private character and official conduct as an officer of the United States government," wrote the pompous Bergner, "we deem it only just and proper...to vindicate our own personal character, but also vindicate that of the government. ..."); *Patriot,* July 23, 1862 ("we want to soldiers' families to have justice," responded the pious Barrett, "—only this and nothing more"); *Patriot,* Aug. 8, 1862.
21. Erwin Stanley Bradley, *The Triumph of Militant Republicanism, A Study of Pennsylvania and Presidential Politics 1860-1872* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1964), 218.
22. *A Philadelphia Perspective, The Diary of Sydney George Fisher Covering the Years 1834-1871,* ed. Nicholas B. Wainwright (Philadelphia: Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1967), 432.
23. William J. Hoppin, "James Samuel Wadsworth," in *Harvard Memorial Biographies* (Cambridge: Sever and Francis, 1867), I, 8-9.
24. Bergner's side of the story is vividly told in Janet Mae Book, *Northern Rendezvous, Harrisburg during the Civil War* (Harrisburg: Telegraph Press, 1951), 64-66, with the *Telegraph* supporting the defendants

and the local provost marshal duly investigating, then calling for dismissal of the charges—all after the example had been set by the arrests and while the Patriot and Union men were spending sixteen days and nights in prison.

25. *Philadelphia Perspective,* 432.
26. *New York Herald,* June 7, 1862; Wendell Holmes Stephenson, *The Political Career of General James H. Lane,* Kansas State Historical Society *Publications,* III (Topeka: B.P. Walker, State Printer, 1930), 111.
27. The subject is discussed exhaustively, but with Regular Army doctrine as the focus, by Mark Grimsley, *The Hard Hand of War, Union Military Policy toward Southern Civilians, 1861-1865* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 23-66.
28. David Herbert Donald, *Lincoln* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1995), 359-360; Stephen W. Sears, *George B. McClellan, The Young Napoleon* (New York: Ticknor & Fields, 1988), 228-29.
29. *Battle Cry of Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 506.
30. John Basil Turchin, who was on that very day being court-martialed for his troops' alleged destruction of Athens, Ala., May 2, 1862 (*O.R.,* I, 16(2), 273-78), a fact known on Capitol Hill and around the country *(Cincinnati Commercial,* July 11: *Pittsburgh Gazette,* July 16, 17), and Fitz Henry Warren, who, as a writer for the *New York Tribune* in June, 1861, was known as the author of its famous if short-lived slogan, "Forward to Richmond" (Donald A. Ritchie, *Press Gallery, Congress and the Washington Correspondents* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 55; Henry Luther Stoddard, *Horace Greeley, Printer, Editor, Crusader* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1946), 213).
31. *Statutes at Large,* XII, (1862): 589-92; George H. Mayer, *The Republican Party, 1854-1964* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 103-104; James Garfield Randall, "The Confiscation of Property during the Civil War" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1913), 11-15.
32. *Abraham Lincoln, Speeches and Writings, 1859-1865,* Don E. Fehrenbacher, ed. (New York: Library of America, 1989), 373-74; William Safire, *Freedom* (New York: Doubleday, 1987), 983-89, 1385; Donald, *Lincoln,* 386-87, 657 n.
33. To Lyman Trumbull, June 5, 1862, Trumbull Papers, LOC.
34. Bradley, *Militant Republicanism,* 86.
35. Bradley, *Militant Republicanism,* 46-47.
36. New York *World,* Nov. 4, 1862, quoted in Silbey, *Respectable Minority,* 86, n. 46. K. McClure, O
37. Alexander K. McClure, *Old Time Notes of Pesnnsyl vania* (Philadelphia: John C. Winston Company, 1905), I, 561; *Patriot,* Aug. 18, 1862.
38. Silbey, *Respectable Minority,* 145, 165.
39. Arnold Shankman, "For the Union As It Was and the Constitution As It Is: A Copperhead Views the Civil War," in *Rank and File, Civil War Essays in Honor of Bell Irvin Wiley* (San Rafael, Cal.: Presidio Press, 1976), 98-99, 101-02; John C. Waugh, *Reelecting Lincoln, The Battle for the 1864 Presidency* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1997), 28-29.
40. *Patriot,* Aug. 15, 1862.
41. Everard H. Smith, "Chambersburg: Anatomy of a Confederate Reprisal," *American Historical Review,* XCVI (1991), 432-55.
42. Ray H. Abrams, "Copperhead Newspapers and the Negro," *Journal of Negro History* 20 (1935): 131-132; Nicholas B. Wainwright, "The Loyal Opposition in Civil War Philadelphia," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 88 (1964): 306-07, 311-12.
43. Nov. 11, 1862; June 25, 1863; Sept. 6, 1864. The Harrison's Landing letter had been distributed widely at the convention: Waugh, *Reelecting Lincoln,* 277.
44. Sears, *McClellan,* 375-76.
45. Arnold M. Shankman, *The Pennsylvania Antiwar Movement, 1861-1865* (Rutherford, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1980), 135, 200-01.